

We'll be ready for contingencies should any be necessary.

As part of its contingency planning, every financial institution is required to assess the Y2K readiness of its major service providers, including telephone, electricity, and other utilities. Financial institutions have a strong track record of dealing with contingencies, such as computer problems and power outages. Financial institutions like your bank also keep back-up records.

As regulators, our job is to be ready for contingencies, no matter how unlikely. In that spirit, regulators and financial institutions are developing plans to make sure consumers have access to their money. The OCC will deal swiftly with problems in any national bank.

National banks are ready for the Year 2000.

To sum up, national banks are meeting the Y2K challenge in exemplary fashion. The industry has made a firm commitment to ensure that you can maintain access to your bank accounts and account information. Contact your bank for specific information about its Y2K readiness.

BANKS ARE READY



Meeting the Y2K Challenge



Comptroller of the Currency
Administrator of National Banks

August 1999

By now you've probably heard about the Y2K bug or the Year 2000 issue. It involves reprogramming computers to make sure they don't mistake the year 2000 for the year 1900. Maybe you know that this glitch has to be fixed by January 1, 2000. What you might not know is that banks and their regulators have made the Year 2000 issue a top priority for more than two years. The banking industry is well prepared for Y2K, and we expect banks to perform with flying colors.

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) has prepared this brochure to explain what banks and their regulators have done to get ready for the century date change. The OCC, established in 1863, is a bureau of the Department of the Treasury responsible for supervising national banks.

This brochure will give you an overview of the Y2K readiness of national banks. For specific information about your own financial institution, we recommend you contact your bank and ask what it has done to prepare for the Year 2000.

The bottom line is — national banks are well prepared for Y2K.

We have been closely supervising national banks' Y2K preparations for more than two years and we can say with confidence that the industry will meet the Y2K challenge. More than 99 percent of national banks finished testing critical computer systems by June 30 and have received our highest possible rating. The very few that are still testing systems will receive our close attention for the remainder of the year to ensure readiness by December 31.

OCC examiners have visited each national bank a minimum of three times in the past two years specifically to review Y2K progress. As a result of our examinations, we are confident that you will be able to conduct business as usual at your bank, both before and after January 1. In fact, many institutions are already successfully using Y2K-ready systems on a daily basis.

There is no need for you to have large amounts of cash on hand.

You are probably aware that holding large amounts of cash can be risky. If you withdraw your money from an insured financial institution, you will be vulnerable to theft, scams, and loss. **The safest place for your money is in your bank.** Your money in a national bank is FDIC insured and no one has ever lost a penny of insured funds.

We expect that you will have the same access to banking services and payments that you have today. The usual payment methods, such as checks, credit cards, debit cards, ATMs, and Fedwire, have been tested extensively and are Y2K ready. Electronic forms of payments, such as the direct deposit of Social Security checks, also have been tested extensively and are Y2K ready.

Check out rumors before you take them seriously.

As we get closer to the New Year, rumors and scare stories will increase. Some people will even try to profit from Y2K by playing on people's fears and uncertainties. Never give out your Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers to an unknown person unless you initiated the call to the bank.

No one from your bank will call you to ask for this information — the bank already has it.

Research shows that even though bank customers expect the media to hype Y2K, some people may still take unnecessary actions in response to the hype. You're also likely to find that advertising with a negative Y2K theme will proliferate as we get closer to the New Year. The Internet provides a fertile ground for spreading unfounded rumors. You should determine the accuracy of any information about Y2K before taking any action.

To help sort fact from fiction, contact a trusted source. Our Internet Web site (<http://www.occ.treas.gov/y2k/default.htm>) has a wealth of information about Y2K. You also can contact the OCC's Customer Assistance Group (1301 McKinney Street, Suite 3710, Houston, TX 77010, 1-800-613-6743, or send an e-mail to customer.assistance@occ.treas.gov).

Other important regulatory Web sites include the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) (<http://www.fdic.gov>), the Federal Reserve Board (FRB) (<http://www.federalreserve.gov>), the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) (<http://www.ots.gov>), the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) (<http://www.ncua.gov>), and the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) (<http://www.ffiec.gov>).

You also might want to check out the President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion (<http://www.y2k.gov>). It's an excellent site to find out more about the federal government's efforts to prepare its computer systems and has a lot of information about the Y2K compliance of other critical sectors of the economy.